

REMARKS

In the Office Action dated March 2, 2005, the examiner rejected claims 1-4 , 15-17 and 19 as unpatentable over O’Nion (U.S. 4, 876,978). Although applicant understands that arguments after final rejection are not entitled to consideration as a matter of right, applicant respectfully requests the examiner to consider the arguments herein because applicant believes that a significant point of the applicant’s argument of February 1, 2005 was not fully addressed in accordance with MPEP § 707.07(f). “Where the applicant traverses any rejection, the examiner should, if he or she repeats the rejection, take note of the applicant’s argument and answer the substance of it.” MPEP § 707.07(f).

Specifically, in paragraph 17 of the office action dated March 2, 2005, the examiner asserts that O’Nion’s column 12 can be considered to be a vessel. The examiner makes this argument without substantively addressing applicant’s argument that although both a column and a vessel can be considered to be a body, a column cannot properly be considered to be a vessel, because such a view is clearly contrary to the definitions and ordinary meaning of the word “vessel” as used in the specification. In the Response to Office Action dated February 1, 2005, the applicant argued that a vessel is defined in The American Collegiate Dictionary as “a craft for traveling on water, now especially one larger than an ordinary rowboat; a ship or boat,” and thus a fixed column cannot be considered to be a vessel. The examiner did not answer this argument, but rather independently avers that because a vessel can be considered to be a body, it necessarily follows that a column, which is also a body, can be considered to be a vessel. This argument is analogous to saying that because both cats and dogs are mammals, it “opens the door” to consider that cats are also dogs. Therefore, applicant kindly asks the examiner to reconsider the claims in light of the substance of applicant’s argument.

In further support of applicant’s argument, the following definitions are provided: “Vessel” is defined as “a craft, especially one larger than a rowboat, designed to navigate on

the water,” Houghton Mifflin Company, American Heritage Dictionary (2d coll. ed. 1985), or as “a usually hollow structure used on or in the water for purposes of navigation.” Merriam-Webster Inc., Webster’s Third New International Dictionary of the English Language Unabridged (2002). “Body” is defined as “the main or central part of something,” or “the passenger or cargo-carrying part of an aircraft, ship or vehicle.” Houghton Mifflin Company, American Heritage Dictionary (2d coll. ed. 1985). “Body” is also defined as “the main, central or principal part of something,” “the hull of a ship,” or “the largest part of a container.” Merriam-Webster Inc., Webster’s Third New International Dictionary of the English Language Unabridged (2002). Clearly, “body” is a broader and more-encompassing term than “vessel.” O’Nion’s column 12 may properly be considered a body, but because it does not navigate in the water, it cannot be considered to be a vessel. In view of these arguments, applicant submits that the rejection of claims 1-4 , 15-17 and 19 as unpatentable over O’Nion is improper, because O’Nion teaches a yoke mounted to a vessel for connecting to a body, and the applicant’s arrangement as defined by the claims is a yoke pivoted at the body for connecting to a vessel. Reconsideration of the claims in light of the arguments herein is respectfully requested.

Claims 11 and 12 are amended to correct informalities, and the specification is amended as requested by the examiner to correct minor omissions and errors. No new matter is introduced.

In summary, claims 1-21 are pending in the application. Applicant believes the application is in condition for allowance. Reconsideration and allowance of claims 1-21 in light of the arguments herein and passage to issue is requested.

Respectfully submitted,



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Date: May 10, 2005

- enc: (1) Substitute specification, marked-up version, 13 pages
(2) Substitute specification, clean copy version, 13 pages
(3) Replacement drawing sheet with Figure 16D

AMENDMENTS TO THE DRAWINGS

The enclosed sheet of drawings includes a change to Figure 16D. No new matter is introduced. This sheet, which includes only Figure 16D, replaces the original sheet including only Figure 16D.